

In the claims:

Please amend claims 1, 4-12, 14, 16-17 and 26-27 as follows:

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1. (Amended) A method of eliciting an immune response against a hepatitis C virus (HCV) E2 or E1E2 antigen comprising the step of (a) administering to a subject a polynucleotide encoding an HCV E1E2 antigen or a full-length E2 antigen, wherein the E2 or E1E2 antigen encoded by the polynucleotide is not secreted when expressed in cells of the subject.

4. (Amended) The method of claims 1-3 or claim 7, wherein the polynucleotide encodes an E1E2 polypeptide.

5. (Amended) The method of claims 1-3 or claim 7, wherein the polynucleotide encodes a full-length E2 polypeptide.

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6. (Amended) The method of claims 1-3 or claim 7, wherein the HCV antigen does not comprise a p7 polypeptide.

7. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the HCV antigen encoded by the polynucleotide is selected from the group consisting of amino acids 384-746 of an HCV polyprotein; amino acids 384-749 of an HCV polyprotein; amino acids 192-746 of an HCV polyprotein, amino acids 192-809 of an HCV polyprotein; amino acids 192-749 of an HCV polyprotein; and amino acids 384-809 of an HCV polyprotein, wherein the amino acids are numbered relative to HCV-1.

8. (Amended) The method of claims 1-3 or claim 7, wherein the polynucleotide is

in a plasmid.

9. (Amended) The method of claims 1-3 or claim 7, wherein the subject is infected with an HCV.

A³ 10. (Amended) The method of claims 1-3 or claim 7, wherein the subject is not infected with an HCV.

11. (Amended) The method of claims 1-3 or claim 7, further comprising the step of administering cardiotoxin to the subject.

12. (Amended) The method of claims 1-3 or claim 7, wherein the polynucleotide is administered using a microparticle.

A⁴ 14. (Amended) The method of claims 1-3 or claim 7, wherein the subject is a mammal.

A⁵ 16. (Amended) The method of claims 1-3 or claim 7, wherein the polynucleotide is administered using a biolistic delivery device.

17. (Amended) The method of claims 1-3 or claim 7, wherein the polynucleotide is administered by a method selected from the group consisting of intramuscular, subcutaneous, intraperitoneal, intranasal, oral, and intradermal administration.

A⁶ 26. (Amended) The method of claims 1-3 or claim 7, further comprising repeating step (a).

27. (Amended) The method of claims 1-3 or claim 7, further comprising administering to the subject a polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide.

As Attached hereto is a version showing changes made to the specification. Deletions are shown by strikethroughs and additions are underlined. Also attached hereto is a page titled "Version with markings to show changes made to claims" as well as a "currently pending claim set."
